

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-13. (cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A ground ~~apparatus~~ vehicle for loading and unloading an aircraft having a cargo compartment, said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle comprising:

a chassis supported by wheels,

a tiltable ramp connected to said chassis, and

a segmented conveyor comprising a connected succession of conveyor units interconnectable by coupling members that allow pivotal movement between each of said conveyor units,

said chassis having a compartment for receiving a portion of said conveyor,

said segmented conveyor having a first end disposed to be placed adjacent said aircraft and a second end,

said segmented conveyor having a first end conveyor unit arranged at said first end of said segmented conveyor, and

said segmented conveyor being at least partially supported by said tiltable ramp,
and

said segmented conveyor being at least partially extendable from said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle into said cargo compartment,

said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle being constructed for storing said conveyor in a folded configuration wherein at least one portion of said conveyor is positioned over at least

one other portion of said conveyor when the succession of conveyor units is in a retracted position.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 14, wherein said first end conveyor unit comprises at least one cargo lifting device having a variable inclination.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 15, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a pivoting element coupled with said at least one cargo lifting device, said pivoting element configured to allow an operator to cause a horizontal pivoting movement of said at least one cargo lifting device.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 14, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle comprises a second conveyor above said segmented conveyor, said second conveyor having a first end disposed to be proximal to said aircraft and a second end opposite thereto.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 17, wherein said second conveyor comprises an endless conveyor belt.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 18, wherein said first end of said second conveyor is approximately coplanar with said second end of said segmented conveyor.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 17, wherein said second conveyor is height-adjustable or tiltable or both height-adjustable and tiltable.

21. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 17, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a bridge member having a first end affixed at said first end of said second conveyor, said bridge member utilized to support said segmented conveyor between said second conveyor and said cargo compartment.

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 21, said bridge member being pivotally affixed at said first end of said second conveyor such that said bridge member can be configured to be approximately horizontal.
23. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 14, wherein each conveyor unit comprises a driven endless conveyor belt.
24. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 23, wherein each endless conveyor belt is driven by a driving roller, and said each conveyor unit further comprises at least one roller supported by a frame which in turn is supported by a support member having wheels.
25. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 23, wherein the width of said conveyor belt is greater than the distance between said rollers.
26. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 23, wherein said coupling members comprise releasable couplings.
27. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 23, wherein said conveyor units comprise a mechanism for extending said segmented conveyor from said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle.
28. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 23, wherein said coupling members further comprise pivots between adjacent conveyor units, said pivots allowing at least limited vertical pivotal movement of a conveyor unit with respect to an adjacent conveyor unit.
29. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 28, said pivots being adjacent the outer periphery of said conveyor units.

30. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 14, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a control system whereby an operator present inside the aircraft can control said segmented conveyor.

31. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 15, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises at least one cargo lifting device control system whereby an operator present inside the aircraft can control the inclination of said at least one cargo lifting device.

32. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim ~~15~~ 17, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a second cargo lifting device at said second end of said second conveyor, said second cargo lifting device having variable inclination.

33. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 32, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a second cargo lifting device control system whereby an operator outside the aircraft can control the inclination of said second cargo lifting device.

34. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 33, wherein said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle further comprises a second pivoting element coupled with said second cargo lifting device, said second pivoting element configured to allow an operator to cause a horizontal pivoting movement of said second cargo lifting device.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 17, wherein a portion of said segmented conveyor beneath said second conveyor is generally parallel and adjacent thereto.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 36, wherein the portion of said connected succession of conveyor units not beneath said second conveyor and generally parallel and adjacent thereto are stored in a folded configuration wherein at least one portion of said conveyor is positioned over at least one other portion of said conveyor when the succession of conveyor units is in a retracted position.

38. (New) The ~~ground-apparatus~~ vehicle of claim 14, said ~~apparatus~~ vehicle being constructed for storing said conveyor in a folded configuration wherein at least one portion of said conveyor is positioned over at least two other portions of said conveyor when the succession of conveyor units is in a retracted position.